(f) whether there would be any significant impact either on the industry or consumer since the release of spectrum of 2G is only marginal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI GURUDAS KAMAT): (a) to (e) Yes, Sir. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been signed between Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Communications and IT. As per the MOU, Ministry of Defence will release spectrum for 2G and 3G services in steps from the date of signing of MOU till the completion of an exclusive, dedicated OFC network for Armed Forces.

As soon as the 2G spectrum is released by Defence the same would be allotted to the telecom operators. The initial/start up spectrum is allotted on the basis of Unified Access Service License (UASL) agreement. Additional spectrum beyond initial spectrum is allotted on the basis of subscriber based criteria formulated from time to time.

(f) The additional spectrum to the existing operators when allotted, subject to the availability in multiples of 1MHz, as per the guidelines in forces, shall make some impact on the 'Quality of Service' (QoS) by 2G service providers.

Open standard formats

1339. SHRI P. RAJEEVE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any Government order issued to use open standard formats for official communication and web interfaces;

(b) if so, the departments that has implemented it; and

(c) if not, Government's stand on using open standard formats in Government offices and institutions?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SACHIN PILOT): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Open Standards help building e-Governance solution that are interoperable. However, it is a very contentious matter and requires wider consultations with Industry, academia and other stakeholders.

Competition in telecom services

1340. SHRI P. RAJEEVE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether DoT turned BSNL completed transition with introduction of competition in Telecom Services;

(b) if so, how far service delivery has improved in so far as rate of growth of number of connections of each category both landline and mobile as also value added services;

(c) to what extent service delivery has improved in so far as time taken for issuing new connections and attending to faults;

(d) to what extent quality of service like speech quality, call maturity rate, reduction in fault incidence etc. improved on conversion from department to company; and

(e) necessary action proposed to be taken to improve quality of service/service delivery?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI GURUDAS KAMAT): (a) Sir, Government decided to set up the corporate entity *w.e.f.* 1st October, 2000, with its name as Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited. The corporations exercise was carried out because in the emerging markets scenario, there was an urgent need to have an organizational structure for the Government's service provision functions which is more suited to deal with the increasing competitive environment. In addition, there was also the need to maintain a level playing field for all the service providers.

(b) The year-wise figure of BSNL landline and Mobile connections is given below:—

As on	Working connection		
	Land line	Mobile	Total
31.03.2000	22,479,421	—	22,479,421
31.03.2001	28,111,883	—	28,111,883
31.03.2002	33,204,489	17,677	32,222,166
31.03.2003	35,416,958	2,256,288	37,673,246
31.03.2004	35,435,637	5,254,117	40,689,754
31.03.2005	35,859,482	9,447,357	45,306,839
31.03.2006	35,422,889	17,163,761	52,586,650
31.03.2007	33,738,604	27,428,658	61,167,262
31.03.2008	31,552,296	36,209,040	67,761,336
31.03.2009	29,346,431	46,711,196	76,057,627

Subsequent to the launch of Mobile services, BSNL has been striving to provide many Value Added Services, like Short Messaging Service (SMS), Personalised Ring Back Tone (PRBT). BSNL has earned revenue of Rs. 1363 crores from the Value Added Services during the year 2008-09.

(c) There is marked improvement in service delivery in so far as time taken for issuing new connections and attending to faults:—

Year	Percentage of NTC providing within 7 days	Average time taken in hours for repairing the faults.
2003-04	—	15.98
2004-05	71.0%	13.51
2005-06	85.0%	12.59
2006-07	95.6%	11.25
2007-08	94.3%	10.21
2008-09	96.4%	9.43

*Date prior to 2003-04 were not being monitored.

(d) The mobile services were launched in October, 2002 and as such comparison of 'Quality of Service (QoS) parameters for Mobile services with the status prior to BSNL formation is not feasible. The Cellular Mobile Services of BSNL are working satisfactorily and is, in general, meeting the Quality of Service (QoS) parameters prescribed by TRAI (Telecom Regulatory Authority of India). The service is comparable with that being provided by other operators.

The extent of improvement of call maturity rate and fault rate (fault incidence rate) in landline network is as under:—

Parameter	1999-2000	2008-09	Net improvement during 10 years
Fault Rate	15.8	5.6	10.2
Call Completion Rate—			
(i) Local	57.65%	64.19%	6.54%
(ii) Junction	46.73%	50.61%	3.88%
(iii) STD	37.79%	47.65%	9.86%

(e) Following are the steps taken to improve the quality of service/service delivery for Mobile and Landline services progressively.

(a) Mobile services:—

(i) BSNL network is, being continuously augmented, optimized, and monitored at various levels.

(ii) BSNL is keeping pace in introducing new features, services and facilities for the benefit of our customers, like Location Based Services, Personalised Ring Back Tones etc.

(iii) BSNLs Franchise network are providing facility of electronic recharge/Top-up through retailers.

(iv) Customers service center on the line of single window concept are also providing commercial, bill payment and complaint handling services.

(b) Land Line services:—

(i) Pole less activity is being carried out. The five pair cable is being used in place of drop wires to reduce fault rate.

(ii) Interactive Voice Response System (IVRS) based centralized fault booking at Short Distance Charging Centre (SDCC) for proper booking of faults.

(iii) Reduction in loop length of cables by opening more and more RSUs/DLCs.

(iv) Induction of Next Generation Network (NGN) in phased manner.

(v) Customer care portal has been launched in each Circle for booking of service request online.

Tele-density in rural areas

1341. SHRI A. ELAVARASAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the percentage of tele-density in the rural areas of our country is very less inspite of the vast development in IT sector;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government has promised under Bharat Nirman to give at least on telephone for each village; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI GURUDAS KAMAT): (a) and (b) No, Sir. The percentage, of tele-density in the rural areas of our country is 16.54% as on 31.05.2009 against the target of 4% rural tele-density by year 2010, as per New Telecom Policy 1999.

(c) and (d) Under the Bharat Nirman Programme, 66,822 revenue villages not having telephone connectivity were to be provided with Village Public Telephone (VPT) facility excluding those villages having population less than 100, those lying in deep forests and those affected with insurgency. Agreements were signed with M/s Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) in November, 2004 to provide VPTs in these 66,822 numbers of uncovered villages. As on 31.05.2009, 57595 VPTs have been provided by BSNL, the implementing agency for the said program. The remaining VPTs are likely to be provided in a phased manner by November, 2009.

Meanwhile, a revised list of villages, which were not having VPT facility, has been prepared after reconciliation of actual number of VPTs provided based on Census 2001. These 62443 villages still remaining uncovered are also being provided with VPT facility with subsidy support from Universal